

Contestant:

School:

Charlene Blackledge

SW Learning Center

Contests I & J - Short Story - Criteria for Judging

Division:

Check one

TEEN LIFE

☒ FANTASY

512

Rate each entry from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

Score

Quality

5	The story reflects accurately the genre in which the student is registered.
4	Story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Parts of the plots are identifiable.
5	There is a good hook to open the story and a strong climax to end it.
4	Characterization is strong; dialogue is realistic.
5	Writer uses a variety of literary devices.
5	Nice variety of sentence structure is used.
5	Vocabulary shows a well-developed knowledge of the use of language.
4	Form, spelling, capitalization, punctuation are accurate

37

TOTAL POINTS (should not exceed 40 points)

Second 7<sup>th</sup>

## Demon's Downfall For Death

"I CAN'T!" she screamed, clawing at her face helplessly. Pure agony rocked her very soul. She couldn't.

"Sherry," came the voice beneath layers of gunk, calmly as if there wasn't anything wrong at all. "It's the only way to stop the demon. Do it." Why was she being so stubborn? Sherry couldn't do it, she thought that was clear at this point. She couldn't.

"Alicia," she sobbed. "You told me there was going to be another way. You promised?"

"I know. I'm sorry." Alicia's voice cracked, and tears flooded down Sherry's face in renewed strength. "But my life isn't worth killing thousands of people."

Sherry shook, both from despair and a sudden pang of fury. "IT IS TO ME!" There was silence for a moment before she screamed again. "I LOVE YOU, DAMMIT!"

More shaky sobs erupted from Sherry, who clutched her arms like that might pull her out of this horror show and back to the old days of laughter and sunshine. It just wasn't fair. Why should Alicia's death specifically be the thing that shattered the demon's life-force? Sherry would rather it have been anyone else's, even her own.

In the back of her mind she realized this was an awful time for a love confession. It just made things harder. But it was the last card

She had left to convince Alicia not to sacrifice her life. Even if there weren't any other options.

"Sherry..." Her voice was so unsteady and tearful that Sherry fell on to the ground, howling in misery and shame.

Rumbles echoed throughout the cave, and rubble rained down on Sherry's blonde curls.

"Please, Sherry," Alicia whispered. "If you really do love me, give me this one last favor. Please..."

This was manipulation in its truest form, and sobs continued to wrack through Sherry's body. From somewhere she gathered the energy to rise from the dirt and stare blurrily at the gunk-covered figure. She couldn't do this. But as more quakes shook the cave, and faint screams reached her ears, she knew she had to. She would never forgive herself for this.

Sherry stepped in close to her friend and tightly grabbed her in her arms. Ignoring the revolting muck, she leaned in and kissed where Alicia's lips should be located, deciding that she at least deserved that before being sacrificed.

"I'm so sorry..."

Sherry took a step back and lit the match. She deliberately tossed it on to the flammable gunk and went numb when she heard the first screams.